



## A Guide to No Child Left Behind & Adequate Yearly Progress Analyses in Nevada

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### What is No Child Left Behind (NCLB)?

In January of 2001, President Bush signed into law the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The new version of this act is commonly referred to as No Child Left Behind (NCLB). A copy of the legislation is available [here](#).

NCLB has four essential elements:

1. Accountability for results
2. Emphasis on doing what works based on scientific research
3. Expanded parental options
4. Expanded local control and flexibility

For more information on NCLB, click [here](#) to access the U.S. Department of Education's Parent Guide to No Child Left Behind.

### What is Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)?

NCLB requires that states implement an accountability system for schools that evaluates whether schools are making Adequate Yearly Progress toward to goals of the legislation. In compliance with NCLB, Nevada AYP classifications are made annually based on the percentage of students tested, the percentage of students tested who score at or above the proficient level on annual statewide tests, and school attendance or graduation rates.

When determining if a school has demonstrated Adequate Yearly progress, performance on 3 indicators ([participation](#), academic achievement [i.e. [status](#) & [safe harbor](#)], and the [other indicator](#) [i.e. average daily attendance/ graduation rate]) is disaggregated among 9 groups in the school. In the past, accountability

systems have focused almost exclusively on the performance of the school as a whole. Under NCLB, performance is evaluated for each population in the school which constitutes a large enough sample to be measured. In Nevada, populations with at least 25 students are evaluated. The 9 groups considered for AYP analyses are:

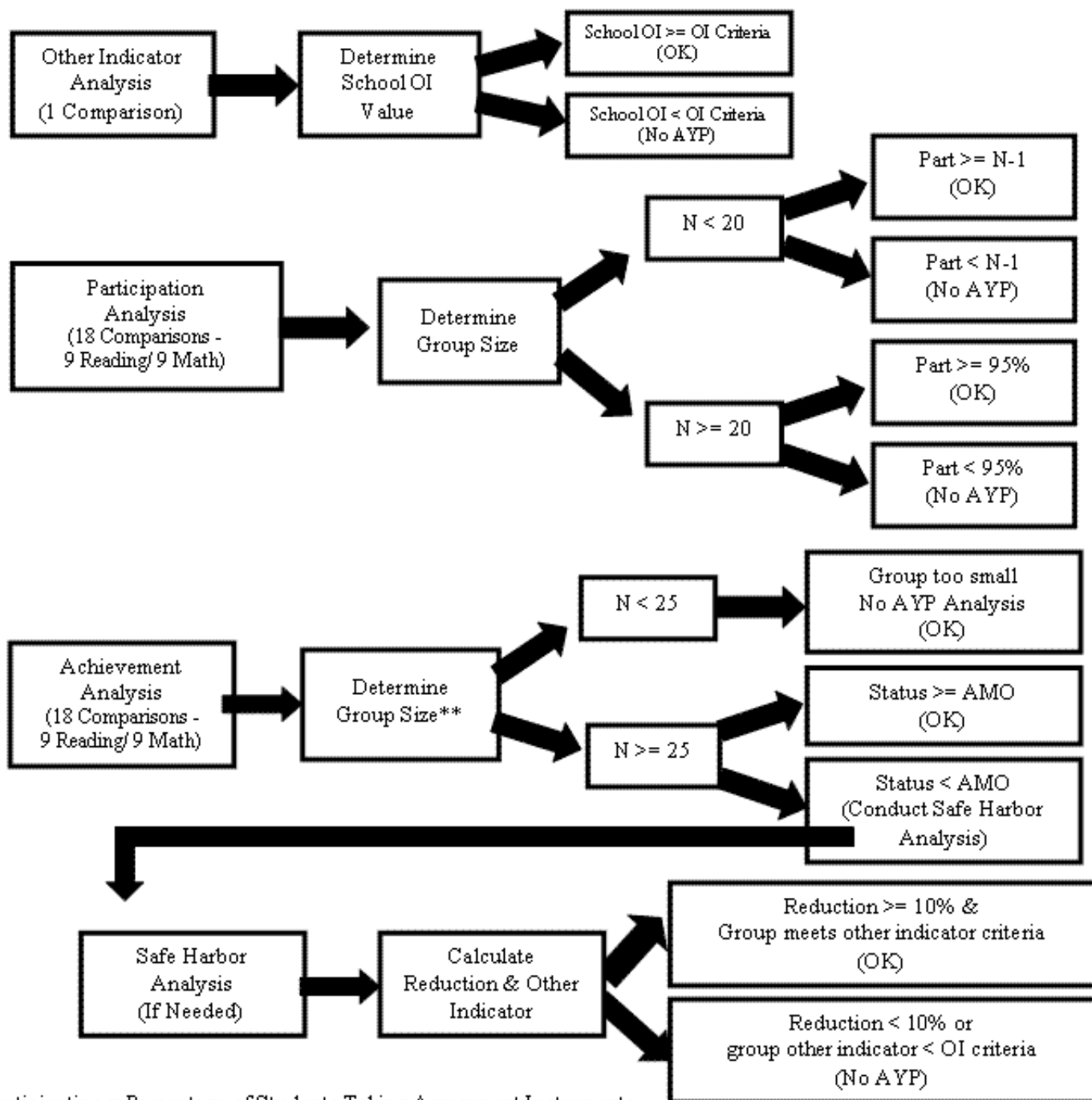
1. The Entire School
2. American Indians/ Alaskan Natives
3. Asians/ Pacific Islanders
4. Hispanics
5. Black/ African Americans
6. White/ Caucasians
7. Students with an Individualized Educational Plan ([IEP](#))
8. Students of Limited English Proficiency ([LEP](#))
9. Students receiving Free or Reduced Price Lunches ([FRL](#))

If any one of the 9 groups does not meet the criteria for the 3 AYP indicators: 1) [participation](#) on math or English language arts tests or 2) annual measurable objectives ([AMO](#)s) in math or English language arts tests and [safe harbor](#) analyses or 3) for the school as a whole on the [other indicator](#) (i.e. average daily attendance or graduation rate), the school is designated as not demonstrating Adequate Yearly Progress. Schools are classified as demonstrating or not demonstrating adequate yearly progress based on three designation areas: English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics, and the other indicator. A flow chart outlining the process for making AYP classifications is included below.

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### ***AYP Analysis Flow Chart***

Please Note: [Participation](#) and [Status](#) analyses are conducted for the entire school and 8 disaggregated groups [5 ethnic/racial, students with an individualized education plan ([IEP](#)), students with limited English proficiency ([LEP](#)), and students who receive free or reduced price lunch ([FRL](#))] in both English Language Arts and Mathematics for a total of 36 comparisons. In addition to participation and status comparisons, the school as a whole is evaluated on the [other indicator](#). If any one of these 37 comparisons is below the target level, the school is designated as not demonstrating Adequate Yearly Progress.



Participation = Percentage of Students Taking Assessment Instruments

Status = Percent of Students Scoring Above Proficiency Cut Score (PAC) + Confidence Interval

Reduction = % Reduction in the Percentage of Non-Proficient Students From Previous Year + Confidence Interval

AMO = Annual Measurable Objective; % of students that must score at the proficient level or higher

\*\* Only subgroups may take advantage of the minimum N-size restriction; the school wide comparison must be conducted regardless of N-size.

## What are Other Indicators?

Other indicators reflect the performance of the school on other important educational criteria. In Nevada, average daily attendance ([ADA](#)) is utilized as the other indicator for elementary and middle schools. The target goal for ADA is 90%. Graduation rate, based on a 9th grade cohort of students, is utilized as the other indicator for high schools. The target goal for graduation rate is 50%. Schools could meet the other indicator criteria, even if they fell short of the target level, by demonstrating improvement

on the other indicator since last year.

Only the school as a whole is evaluated on the other indicator as a separate AYP analyses. If a school's other indicator rate is below the target and improvement since last year has not been observed, the school is classified as not demonstrating adequate yearly progress. Subgroup other indicator performance is not considered unless a subgroup does not meet the [Annual Measurable Objective](#) (see below) and a [safe harbor](#) analysis must be conducted.

## What are Participation Rates?

Participation rates indicate the percentage of students in the school and in disaggregated groups who took the state tests. In previous years, some students were exempt from participating in the state tests for a variety of reasons. NCLB prescribes that all students must be tested. The school as a whole and each of the 8 disaggregated groups are evaluated to determine if at least 95% of students participated. Schools or subgroups with less than 20 students must test at least all but one student to meet the participation criteria. The state department offers multiple opportunities for students to take an exam if they are absent on the scheduled date(s) of testing.

## What are Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)?

Annual measurable objectives represent the percent of students that must score proficient or higher on the state criterion referenced tests (CRTs), writing tests, and high school proficiency exams. AMO baselines were set in mathematics and English language arts ([ELA](#)) for elementary, middle, and high schools based on school performance in the 2001-2002 school year. Per the NCLB legislation, AMOs must increase from the baseline level to 100% by the 2013-2014 school year. AMOs may require adjustment as significant changes to Nevada's assessment system occur.

School and group performance is represented as a PAC rate when compared to the annual measurable objective. PAC rates reflect the percentage of students scoring in the proficient range on state assessments. PAC is an acronym for **Percent Above Cut**: the percent of students scoring above the cut score which defines proficiency on state tests. PAC rates reflect only the performance of students who were continuously enrolled in the school from count day in Fall through the date(s) of testing. ELA PAC rates are derived from student performance on reading and writing tests. Math PAC rates are derived from student performance on mathematics tests.

## How did the state set Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)?

AMOs were set based on a method specifically prescribed in the NCLB legislation. An example for setting the baseline English language arts AMO for elementary schools schedule is provided to clarify this method for the reader.

First, the percent of students scoring above the cut score for proficiency (PAC) in ELA is determined for each elementary school in the state. Along with the PAC rate for each school, the number of students who contributed to calculating each school's PAC rate is determined. These 'enrollment' figures are summed across all schools to determine the total number of elementary students in the state who took the English language arts test in 2001-2002. The total state test enrollment figure is then multiplied by 20% to determine where the baseline AMO will be set.

After rank ordering schools from lowest PAC rate to highest, the number of students who created a school's PAC rate is summed starting with the school with the lowest PAC rate added to the enrollment of the school with the next highest PAC rate until one reaches the 20th percentile of enrollment

determined previously. The PAC rate for the school which falls at the 20th percentile of the state test enrollment then becomes the baseline English Language Arts AMO for elementary schools.

This same method was utilized for setting baseline ELA and mathematics annual measurable objectives for elementary, middle, and high schools. Once baseline AMOs were developed, states had to develop a schedule for increasing all AMOs to 100% by the 2013-2014 school year. In Nevada, a delayed schedule of increases was utilized so that AMOs would remain constant early in the implementation of the NCLB accountability system. However, the scheduled increases in AMOs had to be equidistant toward meeting the 100% goal. A schedule of these increases is presented below.

<b>AYP Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) Schedule of Increases</b>						
	Elementary		Middle School		High School	
	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
Baseline	30.0%	36.0%	37.0%	32.0%	73.5%	42.8%
2002-2003	30.0%	36.0%	37.0%	32.0%	73.5%	42.8%
2003-2004	27.5%	34.5%	37.0%	32.0%	73.5%	42.8%
2004-2005	39.6%	45.4%	47.5%	43.3%	77.9%	52.3%
2005-2006	39.6%	45.4%	47.5%	43.3%	77.9%	52.3%
2006-2007	39.6%	45.3%	47.5%	43.3%	77.9%	52.3%
2007-2008	51.7%	56.3%	58.0%	54.7%	82.3%	61.9%
2008-2009	51.7%	56.3%	58.0%	54.7%	82.3%	61.9%
2009-2010	63.8%	67.2%	68.5%	66.0%	86.8%	71.4%
2010-2011	63.8%	67.2%	68.5%	66.0%	86.8%	71.4%
2011-2012	75.9%	78.1%	79.0%	77.3%	91.2%	80.9%
2012-2013	88.0%	89.0%	89.5%	88.7%	95.6%	90.5%
2013-2014	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

\*Note: High School AMO's reflect target cumulative proficient rates through the 11th grade; as such, these figures are higher than the AMOs for elementary and middle schools. Additionally, due to significant changes in the assessment system for elementary schools in 2003-2004, elementary AMOs were adjusted.

## What is Safe Harbor?

If a school or a subgroup does not meet the AMO target goal, a safe harbor analysis is conducted to determine if the group has made substantial improvement. Safe harbor analyses consider the percent reduction in non-proficient students a school or subgroup has made since the previous school year as well as group performance on the [other indicator](#). If a school or a subgroup demonstrates a 10% reduction in the percentage of non proficient students and the group being evaluated meets the other indicator criteria, AYP criteria are considered as being met for that group.

## What are Confidence Intervals?

Confidence intervals allow for more reliable decisions to be made when conducting AYP analyses. The confidence intervals utilized in AYP are similar to confidence intervals you may have noted when evaluating the results of political polls. Most political polls report a margin of error associated with sampling error. That is, most polls do not sample all Americans when reporting which candidates are favored. Because the results of such polls are based on a limited sample, a margin of error can be

calculated. You usually see such polls reported as something like  $55\% \pm 3\%$ . This means that the reported percentage (55%) could actually range between 52-58%.

Similarly, when AYP analyses are conducted, we are measuring a sample. Each year the population in a school will change slightly - students move in and out of the school, some kids graduate from the school, other kids enter the school at the lowest grade level. Because the stakes in education have never been as high for schools as they are now, confidence intervals are utilized to ensure that negative classifications are not made because of sampling errors.

In deciding to use confidence intervals, the Nevada Department of Education has chosen to utilize only the upper end of the confidence interval to make decisions. This reduces the probability of classifying schools as not demonstrating adequate yearly progress due to sampling error which may have artificially depressed performance.

An example will help to clarify this. Suppose a subgroup in the school had 28% of its students score proficient or better. However, the AMO for this group is 30%. Using confidence intervals, we may conclude with 95% certainty that the true performance of this group could be as high as 32% or as low as 24% (i.e.  $\pm 4\%$ ). Using the upper end of the confidence interval only, the subgroup would meet AYP criteria as their observed performance corrected with the confidence interval (32%) is above the AMO target of 30%. A similar use of the confidence interval is applied to safe harbor analyses.

## What is the Watch List?

The watch list identifies schools which are in their first year of not having demonstrated Adequate Yearly Progress ([AYP](#)). Beyond being classified as not demonstrating AYP, schools are designated as being on watch for the any of the 3 AYP designation areas (1-[ELA](#), 2-mathematics, 3-other indicator) in which they did not meet the target goals. Schools can be placed on the watch list for any combination of not meeting the criteria in mathematics ([participation](#), [PAC](#) / [Safe Harbor](#)), English language arts ([participation](#), [PAC](#) / [Safe Harbor](#)), or the applicable [other indicator](#) (i.e. average daily attendance or graduation rate).

## What does In Need of Improvement (INOI) designation mean?

Schools which have not demonstrated Adequate Yearly Progress for two consecutive years in any of the [3 AYP areas](#) (i.e. English language arts, mathematics, or the other indicator) are designated as In Need of Improvement (INOI). To be removed from In Need of Improvement status, a school must demonstrate Adequate Yearly Progress for two consecutive years in the designation area(s) designated as in need of improvement.

If a school receives [Title I](#) funding, certain consequences or sanctions for being identified as In Need of Improvement are applied. Non-Title I funded schools are still identified and designated, though the sanctions described below are not mandated by the federal law.

When a Title I school is initially designated as In Need of Improvement, the school must offer the opportunity for students to attend another school in the district which demonstrated [Adequate Yearly Progress](#) in the previous academic year. School choice will be offered prior to the beginning of the school year. School districts are required to pay all transportation costs for students opting to transfer to another school until the sending school improves its performance and is removed from In Need of Improvement designation.

In the second year of INOI designation (not demonstrating AYP for 3 consecutive years in one or more



areas), a Title I school must offer supplemental services such as tutoring, after-school programs, and summer school. Parents may also choose to obtain supplemental services from a list of state approved service providers. To see a list of supplemental service providers in Nevada, click [here](#).

If a Title I school remains In Need of Improvement for 3 years (not demonstrating AYP for 4 consecutive years), the school may replace school staff, hire an outside expert to advise the school on how to improve, or adopt a new curriculum.

If a Title I School remains In Need of Improvement for 4 years (not demonstrating AYP for 5 consecutive years in one or more areas), the school district could replace the principal and staff. The district may contract with a private firm to run the school or reopen the school as a charter school.

If all these options are unsuccessful, the state department of education may take over management of the school.

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## Commonly Used Acronyms

ADA - Average Daily Attendance - Refers to the average percentage of students present in a school over the course of the year.

AMO - Annual Measurable Objective - Refers to the PAC target goal which the school and all its subgroups must meet for AYP analyses.

AYP - Adequate Yearly Progress - An accountability system prescribed by the federal government to determine if schools are making process toward narrowing the achievement gap and ensuring all students are proficient in the areas of mathematics and English language arts by the 2013-2014 school year.

CI - Confidence Interval - A statistical method for adjusting observed performance in light of sampling error.

CRT - Criterion-Referenced Test - refers to reading, mathematics, and science tests in Nevada based on state standards.

ELA - English Language Arts - ELA assessments include testing in reading and writing.

FRL - Free or Reduced Price Lunch - Refers to students qualifying for free or reduced price lunches. Commonly used as a proxy for socio economic status.

HSPE - High School Proficiency Examination - A high stakes test in Nevada which students must pass to obtain a standard high school diploma.

IEP - Individualized Education Plan - refers to students who receive special educational services due to a learning disability or cognitive deficit.

INOI - In Need of Improvement - refers to schools, districts, or states which have not demonstrated adequate yearly progress in the same area for two consecutive years or more.

LEA - Local Educational Agency - Commonly used to refer to a school district or educational organization which oversees the operation of schools.

LEP - Limited English Proficient - refers to students who are learning English as a second language and qualify for English language learner services. Also commonly referred to as English language learners (ELL).

NCLB - No Child Left Behind - The commonly used name to refer to House Referendum 1, the 201 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

NDE - Nevada Department of Education

OI - Other Indicator - Refers to additional criteria used to evaluate schools. In Nevada other indicators include average daily attendance for elementary and middle schools and graduation rates for high schools.

PAC - Percent Above Cut - Refers to the percentage of students scoring at the proficient level of higher on state tests.

SES - Socio Economic Status - reflects the economic standing of students' parents or primary providers. Commonly derived from students' eligibility for free or reduced price lunches.